

LUMEN 2014

Virtual World of Computer Games: Reality or Illusion?

Elena Samoylova^{a,*}^a*Post graduate student, Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University, Vatutina str. 24, 11, Nalchik 360003, Russian Federation*

Abstract

Modern computer technologies are the representation of the connection between digital technologies and men's creative abilities. Often, the virtual world is so close to the real, that people cannot even find the differences between them. This applies primarily the various social phenomena, such as Internet - online network, which is so firmly established in the everyday life of a person, that we can say that man does not live one life, but two, and often more lives online. Communication, information retrieval, and entertainment are transferred from the real world in a virtual world. This applies not only to the use the Internet, but also to computer games, in which players can communicate (online games), lead battles, search for treasures, etc. i.e. do what in real life is impossible. The intersection of the two worlds is the moment when the fictional world of the person ceases to seem something distant and unreal, and he begins to realize their fantasies in everyday life: it can be expressed in collecting items of fantasy world (figurines, badges, etc.), role-playing games, cosplay, etc. Then the particles penetrate from the virtual world into real, it create a superposition of two worlds.

© 2014 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>).

Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of LUMEN 2014.

Keywords: computer games; virtual reality; philosophy; cosplay; role-playing games.

1. Introduction to the problem

The modern information technologies are the special sphere of human life, in which the modern man can realize all his necessities and needs with the help of specific technique. The modern information technologies are the mix of computers, other devices and human creative abilities. All this components together can construct a virtual reality –

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +79286929847
E-mail address: blu_sky_angel@mail.ru

a place where all human dreams come true. A virtual reality is an outcome which is based on the imagination and compute techniques. The man as a creator of this system can change it, improve it or even remove it.

One of the Russian researchers of virtual reality A. Sevalnikov makes his own definition of what the virtual reality is “a special system of information reflection, which makes the user feel as he or she is inside the special world created by specific devises” (Sevalnikov, 1999).

Another Russian author N.B. Mankovskaya in her research of the same subject wrote: “Virtual reality – is 3d artificial space crated by computer means, in which the user can get into, can change it and fell the real emotion in real time” (Bychkov, Mankovskaya, 2006).

As I.T. Kasavin notes, that “the modern interest to the virtual reality has obvious epistemological nature, since it is connected with the techniques and methods which can extend the horizon of consciousness, the use of which is a prerequisite for the generation of any cultural object” (Kasavin, 2000).

Nowadays the most of the people think that the virtual reality is nothing more than computer games, and this is the wrong conclusion. Virtual reality can be represented with the wide sector of 2-d and 3-d worlds which we can find in the movies, cartoons, anime, computer games, virtual novels and etc. The modern information technologies are the special sphere of human life, in which the modern man can realize all his necessities and needs with the help of specific technique. The modern information technologies are the mix of computers, other devices and human creative abilities. All this components together can construct a virtual reality – a place where all human dreams come true. A virtual reality is an outcome which is based on the imagination and compute techniques. The man as a creator of this system can change it, improve it or even remove it.

Moreover not all theorists accepted virtual culture and virtual space as a positive phenomenon. So, Bell defines cyberculture and cyberspace as interchangeable terms, and moreover as «a place for the expression of enthusiasms, of ferment, of unusual doings» (Bell, 2001).

At the moment a virtual world increasingly began to penetrate into the real world. This is directly correlated with so-known phenomenon of "immersion" (Edwards, 2001; Holter, 2007) when a person tries to be fully presented in the virtual reality. This means that the man not only is located in the virtual world by the means of computer games and computer, but with the help of special equipment (glasses, gloves, and projector) can be transferred to the virtual world, feels it around himself, feels that his movements are the same as with the character. However, a full immersion of a human into virtual reality currently remains impossible, due to disabilities of computer technologies. Special glasses designed for the simulation of the virtual world, creating only a 90 degree view, and spotlights carrying the environment of the virtual world on the walls of the room, projecting it only in special games genre, often 3-d action.

Thus, we can determinate the objectives of our research:

- 1) reveal what cyberspace is, and describe its characteristics;
- 2) describe methods and ways of penetration of virtual world into the real world;
- 3) display how the cosplay is connected to the virtual and real worlds.

2. Role playing games as a representation of virtual reality

Partly, due to the lack of technologies to create immersive phenomenon, a person tries, at least, bring virtual reality closer to the real world. Most often, this penetration of the virtual world to the real can be seen in the entertainment industry: the games, concerts, movies, television, etc. As an example can serve a role-playing games. Initially role play based on the work carried out by J. Tolkien, but now gaining popularity so-called role-playing online games: Dota 2, World of Warcraft, etc. In such role-playing games, people do not choose for themselves the one of the basic characters, but completely identifies himself with his own, created virtual avatar. Character that was created on its virtual reality comes to life in the real world through its player and special ammunition, makeup. An interesting fact is that the very small number of people in such games (though virtual, though real) chooses the human race. Most often in the virtual world of online gaming and real role-playing games we meet elves, druids, fairies, orcs, dwarves and other creatures.

Perhaps this is due to the fact that modern man feels so-called conflict of identities, and cannot realize who his really is. Many social roles that modern man is forced to play every day, leave their mark. That is why a person seeks, but for a while, get away from the established framework and social rules, and to be who he either physically

or socially isn't – a fabulous creature that exists only on the games and virtual worlds. In part, this can be compared to the phenomenon of escapism – a man escapes from the reality around him, and immerse into a fictional world.

3. Anime and hologram phenomenon

Another example of the penetration of virtual reality in the world, is the emergence of a large number of holograms. Only in Japan their number in the past five years has increased almost twice. The most popular computer hologram became well-known singer Hatsune Miku. Initially, Miku was just a voice in the recording program "Vocaloid". But over time the program was added to not only voice but Miku and her picture. Anyone adding any song into the program, could listen it with Miku's voice. Soon, the program has become popular not only in Japan but also around the world, so the developers decided to add to the program a few more voices and heroes: Kagamine Ren and Rin, Megurine Luka, Kaito, etc. At the moment, all the characters are on peak of popularity (Hsy, 2010). Moreover, every singer has a number of their own clips, and Miku even held a series of concerts and a world tour. As a singer on the stage was performing a computer hologram that fully mimic all the movements of the heroine in different videos. It is worth noting that almost all Vocaloids have multimillion army of fans around the world, who are waiting for new videos of computer idols. Popularity of this computer program can be attributed to the following reasons:

- 1) a large number of voices and versatility characters (despite the fact that the picture and the voice is it just the element of the program, for each character was created his own character and model of behavior, which is reflected in music videos and voice);
- 2) a new form of entertainment (any song you can listen to and add to the program);
- 3) to watch video clips and concerts (the developers of the program had also written songs for each unique character and design their own video clips) .

Another example of penetration the virtual world into real can be represented by anime culture. "Anime" is a abbreviation from the English word "animation", it is a special type of animated films. These films are differ from another by its own particularly technique of drawing characters, complex narrative lines, and deep philosophical and psychological ideas. Anime culture, in turn, is not limited to animated films but also includes manga - Japanese comics, on which almost all anime are based. The fans of anime culture create some individual product. In particular, they try to bring virtual reality what they had seen on the screen or in the manga, into real life. So, there are **dodjinsi** - amateur manga, **AMV** (Anime Music Video) - Amateur video clips based on the anime and **fanfiction** - amateur stories. All these species are aimed at showing human, individual vision of virtual reality, human self-actualization .

4. Cosplay and virtual reality

Moreover one of the manifestations of the impact of the virtual world in the real world can be regarded as a popular worldwide phenomenon of cosplay. The term "cosplay" is derived from the English "costume-play", which translates as cosplay. Many relate cosplay to the theater or ball-masquerade, although this is not entirely true. Cosplay implies transformation into Japanese anime characters, manga, computer games, as well as attempts to "try on" the image of the typical representatives of national culture (samurai, geisha, emperors). Although initially there was only Japanese cosplay culture phenomenon (cosplay made initially only manga and anime). Now cosplay becomes popular in the U.S., Europe and Russia (especial the cosplay of Disney cartoons characters, movies etc.).

Definition of the cosplay as masquerade is only partly true, because cosplay can be as massive as an isolated phenomenon. Mass cosplay usually occurs at various festivals cosplay-con) and "party", the unit - for photo shoots. In many countries, cosplay began to emerge along with the communities of Tolkien fans and science fiction, and only in the XX century, it developed as an independent movement. In Japan, cosplay has become part of the national culture, and showing the cosplay going on all sorts of presentations, film festivals (especially anime festivals), national and children's parties.

Cosplayer not only recreates the character in the current reality, but also seeks to partially recreate his era, a time in which he lived, by means of modern reality. More Husserl wrote: "I am creating a world infinitely prostrate in

space, endlessly becoming and became in time. I did just find it clearly - is primarily in the experience" (Husserl, 2004). World of cosplay, or rather the world of the hero becomes temporarily in our world by means of an actual reality (at houses, castles, parks, which are similar to those that exist in an alternate reality), and thanks to the means of expression of the cosplayer: costume, wig, weapon accessories.

Cosplayer temporarily recreates his character, demeanor, his appearance. Real time is running out for cosplayer by the wayside because, live in the role of a character man "tolerated" in the historical or alternative era in which the hero acts.

5. Conclusions

In this article, we just to name a few examples of the penetration of virtual reality in the real world. A range of modern information technologies is increasingly expanding and consequently increase the penetration of virtual reality techniques. Summarizing, we can conclude that the penetration of virtual reality in the modern world is an irreversible process. Development of information and computer technology allows modern man to live a double or triple life, and therefore one reality anyway will be superimposed on another. Perhaps in the future the virtual world and the real world are inseparable, but it is only predictions.

Acknowledgements

The paper is published within the Grant of the President of Russian Federation "Ontology of virtual space". MK-1139.2014.6

References

- Sevalnikov, A. (1999). Virtual reality and problems of its description. *Smirnov's lectures*, 2, 226-227.
- Bychkov, V., Mankovskaya, N. (2006). Virtual reality in the space of aesthetic experience. *Philosophy papers*, 11, 47-59.
- Kasavin, I. (2000). *Tradition and interpretation: the fragments of historic epistemology* (p. 21). Moscow.
- Edwards, R. (2001). GNS and Other Matters of Role-playing Theory. *Adept Press*, 11.
- Holter, M. (2007). Stop saying «Immersion»!. *Lifelike*, 07.
- Hsy, T. (2010). Japanese pop star Hatsune Miku takes the stage as a 3-D. *Los Angeles times*, 11.
- Husserl, E. (2004). *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*. San Petersburg: Vladimir Dal.
- Bell, D. (2001). *An Introduction to Cybercultures*. London: Routledge.